

How to Get Great Book Reviews: 5 Ways

by Chazda Albright -

<http://greatstorybook.com/how-to-get-great-book-reviews-5-ways/>

This entry is part 1 of 12 in the series [Book Promotion](#)

[Book Promotion](#)

- How to Get Great Book Reviews: 5 Ways
- [How to Plan Great Book Signings](#)
- [How To Make Amazon Work For You, #1: Author Page](#)
- [How To Make Amazon Work For You, #2: Sales Ranking & Category](#)
- [Who Gets Results Promoting on Facebook](#)
- [How To Plan a Great Book Launch Party](#)
- [An Author Website: what it should be and DO](#)
- [Get Your Book Into Bookshops](#)
- [Top Social Media Platforms for Writers](#)
- [The Author's Book Marketing Checklist](#)
- [What is Bookbub Exactly?](#)
- [Increase Book Sales with a Great Title: 9 Tips](#)

Whether your book is traditionally published or self-published, it's up to you to get word-of-mouth going for your story.

Getting great book reviews is one of the ways you can and should do that. But how?

The short answer: you ask. But who should you ask and how? That's what I want to discuss in some detail here.

If you have self-published your book, you may have already discovered that most professional book reviewers (read: readers who are paid by newspapers or magazines for their critique) will not consider self-published titles for review.

It doesn't matter. Really. Most traditionally published books don't get reviews from those writers either. So where should you look?

Artwork by Jonny Lindner.

There are reviewers who focus on or at least consider self-published books. The trick though is in finding someone who *should* review your work.

What's important: realize that reviewers are not impartial judges. You want someone who is most likely to genuinely enjoy what you have written. If the reviewer loves dark thrillers, they might not be the right person to judge your princess fantasy story.

As a writer, you simply have to do the hard work of tracking people down. Here are five solid ways of doing that:

1. Look for Bloggers.

Today, more people look to blogs for the buzz on what's worth reading. Book critics still have some impact, but according to [a 2011 survey conducted by Mark Coker](#), only 7% of active readers make their decision to purchase because of a professional book review. Fully 26% of those surveyed make their decisions based on blog reviews. (I fall into this category myself.)

Make sure you pick the *right* blogger, otherwise you could end up with a bad review. And of course, the more the merrier. Get as many as you can and never stop looking for more.

This means you need to search. Look for bloggers that evaluate the type of book you've written. If you've created an illustrated storybook, look for blogs about parenting and teaching. If you've created a YA novel, look for blogs from readers in that age group.

The unfortunate thing happening right now is that a lot of mom bloggers who review books for kids are starting to refuse self-published titles. The reason for this is clear: too many people are self-publishing stories that need more work. The only way we can counteract this blog-trend is to improve the quality of self-published books being brought to the market.

How to find individual bloggers who review books (including self-published ones)? Thankfully, Wikipedia has organized a directory for us.

[Childrens Book Reviews \(A Wikipedia Directory.\)](#)

Fully organized by reader demographic, which really helps!

NOTE: Not all of these bloggers accept self-published titles for consideration, but you will need to cruise through the list to see what best suits your story anyway.

2. Ask Your Readers

Include a Review Request either at the back of your book or in the beginning (such as in a Letter to the Reader). Be sure that you ask your readers to leave an honest review, and not necessarily a glowing one.

What you need to remember here is that people will expect *someone* to not be in love with your book. That is how things simply are. If you only have glowing reviews, this could hurt your sales. Why? People distrust the overly polished collection of reviews.

Here is a review website where all the reviews are written by kids.

[The Spaghetti Book Club](#)

3. MyShelf Yourself

[MyShelf](#) provides book reviews, but it's also a portal where you can submit a column or Press Release of your book. To do that, send a query to info@myshef.com (with Subject: Babe to Teen Column). The site offers various other categories for you to submit your work. Peruse what's there and see where your project fits the best.

Guest Blog. Don't be afraid to contact websites with a request to Guest Blog. While it isn't a Book Review, it is coverage, free publicity - and it's a good way to get your book reviewed by readers! Remember: you do not have to have a blog in order to guest blog.

4. Hire/Request an Honest Book Review

There are some reviewer websites that are willing to review your book for a fee – and they even *promise* a positive review. This is unethical. It also hurts the publishing industry because it teaches buyers to distrust any reviews that they might read.

The following Book Review Providers are all ethical (and will not be deleted by Amazon). They each provide different types of book reviews and distribution packages of their reviews.

Kirkus Reviews

[Kirkus Reviews](#) are expensive (\$425-\$575), but they are highly respected by readers and publishing professionals. If you want the pros to become aware of your book, getting a great Kirkus Review can be a big boon. (I would only do this if your book is available in print.)

Warning: Kirkus is absolutely unbiased. You will still pay their fee even if the critic rips your book apart. This is why a great review from them is so coveted and revered.

Self-Publishing Review

[Self-Publishing Review](#) offers three types of book reviews that they also distribute for you. Their prices range from about \$70 to \$300, depending on the bells and whistles you want with your review package.

The site does not guarantee a great review, but if you pay for the middle or higher grade packages, you can ask that the review not be published.

Book Review

[Book Review](#) doesn't require payment for reviews, but if you want to ensure that your book will be read and reviewed within 15 days, the fee is \$185.00. They also offer (strangely) a deal where you can have your book simply listed on their website for \$45 - without a review. I really don't see the benefit of that at all, but it is an option.

Book Browse

[Book Browse](#) doesn't as yet review children's books, but their format and service is professional and their concept remarkable. Avid readers join up and can receive free ebooks of as yet unpublished books. That means you can send in your galley for review. Not all book review sites enable this. **All reviews on Book Browse are FREE.**

Indie Book Reviewers

There are many reviewers who review indie books for free. Below are some who promise that their reviews are always honest. They not only post to their own website, they also spread these around to various other book review sites. (Note: should you find that any of these reviewers are no longer accepting review requests, please let me know so that I can remove them from this list.)

[Looking Glass Review](#)

Illustrated storybooks.

[Chodi Kids Books](#)

Illustrated storybooks (preschool up to grade 2).

Maggie Lyons is a children's book author who has compiled a great list of [MG Book Bloggers HERE](#).

[Just Another Girl and Her Books](#)

YA novels

[Go Paintbrush](#)

Illustrated storybooks and YA novels, but not chapter books (usually).

[Book Alachi](#)

Illustrated storybooks, chapter books and YA novels.

[The Childrens Book Review](#)

All kids books.

Complete Review

[Complete Review](#) is another resource for FREE book reviews. The site also includes links to other reviews of that book title they're reviewing, so it's a good portal. To request a book review, send an

email to their editorial board at editors@complete-review.com.

Kindly, Complete Review has also gone through the trouble of listing many, many other Book Review sites, organized by the scope of the reviewer. [Here it is](#).

5. Give-Away books on Reader Portals

The more books you give away, the more people will know of your book's existence. Give away books on portals like [Good Reads](#) and [Library Thing](#). Too, many book review sites also provide give away opportunities. Those opportunities come from you! **Highly** recommend jumping in on that.

In fact, if you see any opportunity to give your book away for free, do it. Charity fund-raiser? Perfect. You help someone out and you spread word of your book at the same time.

What Else?

There is no end to what you can do to promote your books. Getting reviews is just one of them.

What about you? *What are some things you've done to promote your writing?* Write below, let everyone know – or just send me an email.

Keep creating, no matter what.

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